



MINERVA SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

Learning for Life

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DATES TO REMEMBER

**TERM 4
2014**

DECEMBER
Wednesday 18th
Last Day
for Students
Term 4 Holidays
Begin

**TERM 1
2015**

JANUARY
Tuesday 27th
Staff Development
Day

Wednesday 28th
Students Return to
School for First Day
of Term 1

Welcome to our new Calm Room

We have revamped a room in the office area to create a calming space in the school for students to go to when needing some support to regulate their behaviour.

Why the Colour Blue?

Blue, the colour of the sky and the ocean. The room was painted blue as this colour promotes both physical and mental relaxation. A room painted in peaceful tranquil blue has been known to cause the body to produce calming chemicals, reducing stress and creating a sense of calmness. We all know how calming it can be to lay on our back and look up into a clear blue sky so why not bring that sense of peace into a room.

Students have access to this room as required throughout the school day for when they are feeling upset, angry or anxious. The idea is that they have a quiet calming space to feel safe and/or reflect on their behaviour. To help facilitate regulation of their behaviour whilst in the calm room students have access to visualisation books displaying an array of calming pictures, optical and tactile sensory items and the choice of having a weighted blanket. Students can also sit back, relax and escape with their thoughts whilst looking at a mural of an ocean scene painted on one of the walls by a local artist.



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

This Term has flown by at a remarkable rate. Once again the staff and students have had a successful term with many highlights such as the whole school sailing program, Art Exhibition, Grandparents Day, Sensory Garden opening, Presentation Day and Yr 12 Formal evening to name a few.

CONGRATULATIONS - To Michelle Cooney and husband Dean on the recent birth of their beautiful daughter Summer, a sister for Eli.

PARENT SURVEY - Many thanks to those parents who took the time to complete the survey and provide feedback. The results were very favourable and will be available next year. There will be further opportunities for community consultation in 2015.

P&C—On behalf of the students and staff I extend our thanks to the wonderful P&C who have made significant contributions throughout the year to support the students and the school. We could not do it without you.

THANKYOU—A very big thank you to the Ward Family who generously donated a Portable Sound System to the school. The staff and students will be able to access music in a variety of settings.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY—On the 18th and 19th Dec teaching staff will be having Professional Development with Laura Faber on program builder to support class programming for the new curriculum and also assessment, investigating and sharing of Ipad apps that were implemented in 2014 and forward planning 2015. This will be followed by the whole staff planning for the new 2015-2017 School Plan.

STAFF FAREWELL—This term we say goodbye to Michelle Cooney and Michelle Rizzuto who have accepted transfers to other schools. We thank them for their contributions to Minerva and wish them all the very best for the future.

YEAR 12 STUDENTS— We say goodbye to our graduating Yr 12 students Jake W, Jayden H, Mason W, James S, Patrick A, Mitchell G, James C and Conrade N. We wish them every success in their next journey. We hope you will visit and share your stories with us. We will miss you all.

SENSORY GARDEN—The official opening was held on Monday 15th December attended by Craig Smith, Relieving Learning & Engagement Coordinator from Miranda District Office, parents and sponsors. The weather was glorious and it was wonderful to acknowledge and thank all those involved.

THANKYOU TO STAFF— I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the whole staff for their dedication and commitment to our students during the year.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE—I would also like to thank our parents and carers for their support throughout the year and on behalf of the staff and students I wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. I look forward to working with you in 2015.

Regards
Fiona Young
PRINCIPAL

Commonwealth Bank Sutherland Branch

Our local Commonwealth Bank, very kindly donated to each of our students, their very own money box. As you can see the students were very excited to receive such a lovely gift. Here's hoping this encourages our students to begin saving their pocket money. Staff from the Commonwealth Bank have been very supportive of our school with donations which has enabled the purchase of new equipment for our Sensory Room. We thank the Commonwealth Bank staff for their ongoing and generous support of our students.



LIBRARY



A big thank you to Mitchell from Class D for being our library assistant for 10 weeks, completing tasks such as shelving books, helping students with research, circulation duties - returns and loans.

Ipads have been a great success in library classes, with many students taking part in being an author or storyteller. We have used photos from our experiences eg. Buddy Reading Program and created audio e-books with the book creator app. Another favourite has been creating stories using puppet pals. Alessandro from Class L and Jake from Class D collaborating on a project.



MINERVA'S POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR REWARD SYSTEM

At Minerva we have many opportunities whereby students are encouraged & rewarded for their positive behaviour. Such as The **Student Achievement Award** System where

6 Achievement Certificates = 1 Excellence Award

3 Excellence Awards = 1 Medallion

5 Medallions = 1 Plaque

And the **Principal Award Stickers** where

6 Principal Stickers = Blue Dot

12 Stickers = Green Dot

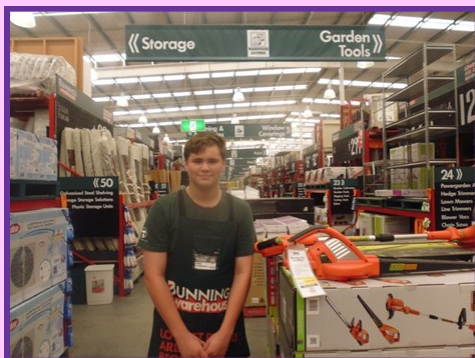
18 Stickers = Yellow Dot

The coloured dots represent a particular shelf in the Principals Prize Cabinet. Students look forward to collecting their Principal Award stickers so they can then choose from the many wonderful items in Mrs Young's Prize Cabinet.

Work Experience

We have come to the end of another very successful year of work experience.

Michael from Class A has been working at Bunnings Kirrawee as part of the Combined District schools work experience program (CDSWEP). We have had very positive reports back from his supervisor.



Petcare 2000 has been very happy with our team of hard workers, who have put many products on the shelves for sale, including bird and mouse cages, cat scratchers and pet carriers. Well done boys!

We also had an industrious team working at *Civic Industries*, many students new to the group and the old hands showed their skills and abilities with buying train tickets, fine motor tasks and co-operating with the team.



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We wish the following students a very Happy Birthday

Jake W	17th Dec
Warwick K	21st Dec
James S	29th Dec





Class D have been working hard with the Bongos to practise their rhythm and timing in preparation for the "Happy" Presentation Day extravaganza.

Class D boys busy preparing for Hot Dog Day



Class C have had an excellent year and are all looking forward to the Christmas holidays. Merry Christmas Everyone !



CLASS R



Nicholas enjoys his fresh fruit for recess



Warwick loves Friday Assembly



David likes practicing the Minerva School Song

Peter, Paul & Mary... and Kieran.
Music choice time brings a beautiful smile to Kieran's face !



All Class R boys have enjoyed the Christmas Elfing internet program.



Class C returned from their Community Access to Cronulla in their new T-Shirts.



Thank you to **3 Queens and Me** for providing the photo booth and props at a very reasonable price for the Year 12 Formal. The Staff, Students and their families enjoyed dressing up and having their photo taken. Keep this Company in mind for your next party. You can find out more about them by visiting their site www.3queensandme.com.au. Thank you to Barbara Ward for organising this fun activity.



Thank you also to Amanda Cooper from "Party and Cake Decorating Heaven" for donating the wonderful table decorations. Your generosity is much appreciated. You can find out more about them by visiting their website www.partyandcakedecoratingheaven.com.au or ph:9532 1084.

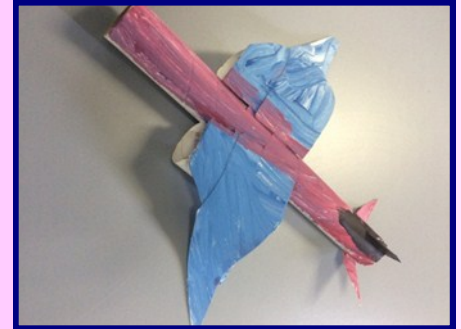
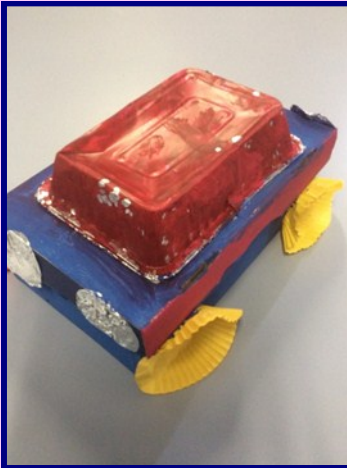


Class L have been developing their play skills. We are wonderful at sharing, cooperating and using our words to ask for things!



CLASS EJ

As the final term comes to a close, Class EJ has worked consistently throughout the term, focusing on the Asian society, culture and history whilst also looking at simple machinery. We have been busy watching and analysing the Japanese film 'Spirited Away' and thoroughly enjoyed creating our own simple machines using recyclable goods. We look forward to the New Year and wish you all a very Merry Christmas!



PRESENTING OUR GRADUATING YEAR 12 STUDENTS

Their final days and the Formal

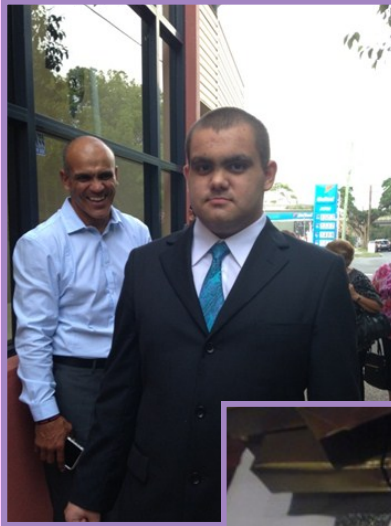


Class of 2014

Our fabulous eight young men



Year 11 and 12 on arrival at the Formal



Father and son looking very proud.

Staff and Students ready to Party!



The Graduation Cake



A night of celebration



And Dancing



The end of **CLASS A** 2014 ushers in the beginning of a promising future for our Yr 12 men.

We are very proud of your achievements and are privileged to have been partners with you in your education and development into the fine young men that you now are. Class A would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.

CLASS M hosted the Year 6 Celebratory afternoon held to congratulate all year 6 students in completing their Junior school years. The students were treated to a movie afternoon on comfortable sofas with hot chips, popcorn, drinks and ice blocks. Congratulations to our graduating year 6 students Chris D, Gregory K, Lachlan N, Daylan B, Jarnte R and Kane L. Many thanks to Christine and Peter Damcevski for funding this very successful afternoon. The students all had a great time!



Merry Christmas from Class M!



Class N having been getting into the Christmas Spirit and have made a class Christmas tree. They have made all the decorations and it now hangs in the front office for all to admire!



CLASS K boys are ready for Christmas!



SENSORY GARDEN OPENING

Monday 15th
December 2014

SENSORY GARDEN OPENING

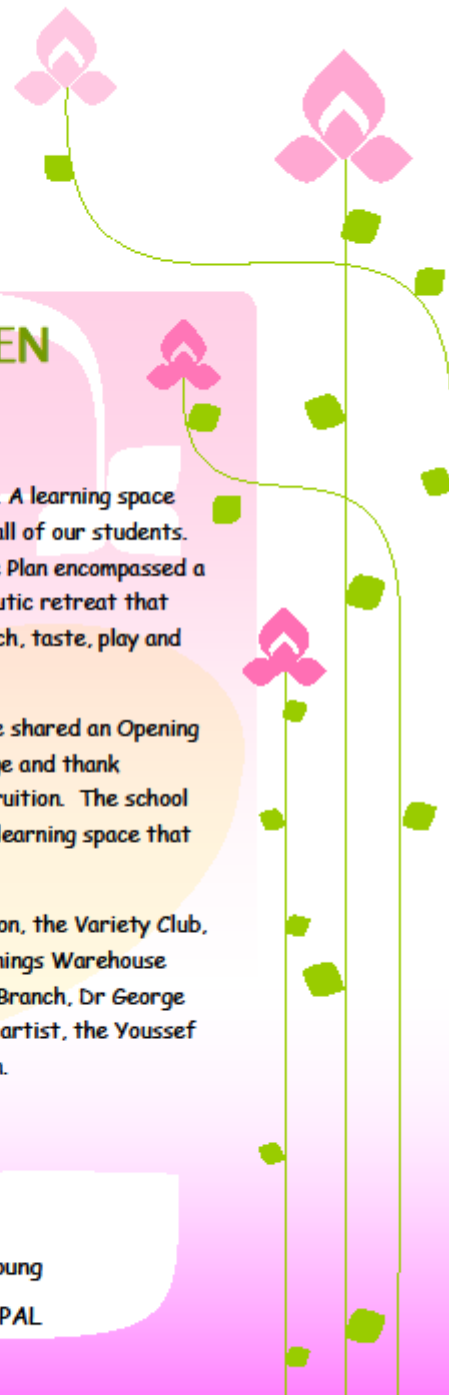
3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years ago I had a vision to build a Sensory Garden. A learning space that would provide sensory stimulation and delight to all of our students. A concept plan was developed by Carolyn Wemyss. The Plan encompassed a space that would be interactive and provide a therapeutic retreat that would take students on a journey of colour, sound, touch, taste, play and above all imagination.

On a glorious sunny day on the 15th December 2014, we shared an Opening Ceremony to formally open the Garden and acknowledge and thank everyone who contributed in bringing the project to fruition. The school now has a Sensory Garden which is a highly beneficial learning space that assists students to regulate their sensory challenges.

In particular, I would like to mention Mates on a Mission, the Variety Club, Teachers Mutual Bank, Como-Jannali Rotary Club, Bunnings Warehouse Kirrawee, Gynea Tradies, CWA StGeorge Sutherland Branch, Dr George Williams, Joe from Turn Me On, Sam Shennan a mural artist, the Youssef and Homsy Families and our wonderful P&C Association.

Regards

Fiona Young
PRINCIPAL





2014 P&C UPDATE

As outgoing President of the Minerva P&C I am pleased to provide this Update of our achievements in 2014.

The P&C's overall aim is to support the efforts of the teaching staff by raising much needed funds and providing other assistance for special projects that improve the learning outcomes and daily school lives of our student's.

Some of the more notable achievements this year include:

- A highly successful Trivia Night that raised funds for the Ipad project.
- A very successful program of raffles and stalls throughout the year.
- Support in organising the Year 12 Formal
- The construction of The Sensory Garden.

Of course none of this would be possible without the support of the school community, the hardworking P&C members and our wonderful supporters.

Perhaps less well known is the transformation that has occurred within the P&C with the adoption of established protocols, procedures and the code of conduct provided to all members of the committee. This has improved the harmony and effectiveness of the P&C and has significantly improved its working relationship with the School.

I wish the P&C every success in 2015.

Barbara Ward
President 2014

Merry Christmas

Ritchies Supermarket Community Benefit Program

Ritchies Supermarket at Taren Point run a Community Benefit Program whereby donations are made to a nominated School. Minerva School has been nominated by a few of their customers. So, spread the word to family and friends, to shop at Ritchies and get a community benefit card linked to our school. This is an easy way for family and friends to help support our school. Just use your card each time you shop at Ritchies and the store will donate to our School.



Autism Community Network



A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT FOR AUTISM

- Free support groups for parents and carers
- Social groups to help children with an ASD and their siblings
- Connecting families with similar interests or situations
- A regular newsletter and a website to provide information and options

Tel: (02) 9584 0073 | 0431 724 229
5/154 Broadarrow Rd Riverwood NSW
PO Box 188 Riverwood NSW 2210
info@autismcommunity.org.au
www.autismcommunity.org.au
ABN: 64 107 602 515

PILATES
FOR CARERS - 10.30AM THURSDAY

Are you a Carer who would like to try Pilates?



Benefits of Pilates:

- Stress relief through body awareness & breathing techniques.
- Create back support through abdominal, core based exercises.
- Stretches, strengthens & tones the whole body.

Please call Cheryl on 0417 417 217 as bookings are essential.
Cheryl is a Certified Pilates Instructor and Counsellor.

**SPECIAL FOR CARERS
ONLY \$10 PER CLASS**

Pilates classes are held at Carousel Counselling Services
15A Elton Street Sutherland

SAM SHENNAN

HAS INKY FINGERS
LOVES TO DRAW & DIGS DESIGN

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